Annex "A," Subparagraph 1h,

Sociological Background

SOCIAL VALUES AND PATTERNS OF LIVING

342 Dwellings and housekeeping. The houses without chimneys which were generally used by the Votes in former times, have nowadays completely disappeared. The typical Votic dwelling house consists of two rooms which are separated from each other by a front hall. One door leads into the hall from the front side, and the other one opensto the cattle yard. There are some dwelling houses which consist of one living room and front hall, but they belong to the former small farmers.

251 The front hall functions as the pantry. Bowls with milk are there on the shelves and
352 other foodstuffs are kept in a big box. There are also round boxes for linens and cupboards for clothes. In former times there was in the front hall a bed furnished with a special cover above it as protection against fleas and gnats, but now only the cover has been preserved in some of the older houses.

354 The Votic living rooms have big white
[353] stoves, paper-covered walls and light or ornamented bedcovers, and they seem quite up-to-date. The typical ancient stoves, built on a wooden base and furnished with a thick wooden corner-pillar, have completely gone out of use.
352 The wall benches, however, have been almost generally preserved.

342 One of the living rooms is used for
574 everyday purposes. The other is kept clean and

342 used mainly as the sleeping room of the grown-
574 up children or the young married couple, if they are staying with the parents. Also, the guests on their first visit are invited to stay in this room. Since the people seldom go to this room, its floor is exemplarily clean. Often it is covered with a home-woven rug.

356 Cleaning the rooms and keeping them in order has almost a ritual significance for the Votes. The floors and the wall benches were formerly scrubbed every Saturday. But before great holidays, especially before Easter, the cleaning was extended also to the walls and even the ceilings. Therefore the walls of the Votic rooms, even though they were not white-washed or covered with wallpaper, were amazingly clean. In addition to the washing and scrubbing, the old people remember another special method for cleaning which was employed before festivals and weddings. This was the scraping of the walls. The walls of the rooms which had no stove were first swept clean of soot and then scraped still whiter with a special iron tool or with big knives. For Christmas, Easter and other great holidays and for weddings, the floors were covered with
[764] straw. When there was a corpse in the house, fir branches were strewn on the floors.

584 Customs, superstitions. The Votic wedding customs in earlier times were considerably different from what they are today. Porthan tells that at the end of the eighteenth century the Votic boys did their wooing as they wished, without the knowledge of their or the
[582] girls' parents. The usual age for marriage was 15 years for the boys and 12-15 for the girls. The young people informed the priest of their